

Books and the People Who Make Them

A Painter's Portrait

By GEORGE GORDON.

SPEAKING at a dinner in London almost thirty years ago, John Singer Sargent said, "After all, Frank Duveneck is the greatest talent of the brush of this generation." It is, as you know, not possible to prove such a statement. And yet if you are of an open mind, your preference not already given to Zuloaga, Max Liebermann or Anders Zorn, you will be convinced of the truth of Sargent's statement when you have carefully studied Duveneck's work. Indeed that judgment, deliberately given by the man whom artists and laymen alike regard as technically the most brilliant of painters, never has aroused any contradiction among artists; and it received final sanction when at the Panama-Pacific Exposition, San Francisco, 1915, the foreign members of the jury, indorsed by the entire American jury, recommended that in addition to all other various and regular awards won by Duveneck on account of his exhibited work in oils, etching and sculpture, a special medal of honor be struck and presented to him as "some special recognition of his distinguished contribution to American art."

Born in 1848 at Covington, Ky., across the Ohio River from Cincinnati, where he has lived for the past twenty years teaching and directing for the Cincinnati Museum (as a permanent representation of an artist the museum collection of Duveneck's, for the most part his own gift to the city, is unique), Duveneck has spent his life for America, and his work has been vital to our native art. As early as 1877 the sensation of the National Academy Exhibition was his Turkish Page (now owned by the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts), and his portraits were hailed at that time as "an earnest of the day when our artists shall be bred as well as born at home and the seal of a foreign school, the approval of a foreign master, shall no longer be necessary to give an American a position among his countrymen." You would say that no man could fulfill the promise of such precocity; yet when later his etchings of Venice were shown at the Hanover Galleries in London in 1881 several members of the Society of Painter-Etchers believed them to be the work of Whistler under a nom de plume—and you must remember that Whistler is the greatest etcher since Rembrandt and that this was Duveneck's first work in etching. It may seem impossible to our more informed judgment that such a mistake could have been made, for Duveneck's work differs radically in tone and temperament from Whistler's, but even the suspicion of such a "joke"—not beyond the gentle artist making enemies—gives proof of Duveneck's complete mastery of his medium.

But until Norbert Heermann's monograph was published by Houghton Mifflin Company last month no just and full appreciation of Duveneck had appeared. This volume is therefore doubly welcome both on account of the interest attaching to Duveneck and the clear, honest criticism of his work (twenty reproductions of the more important canvases appear as illustrations) presented by Professor Heermann. Art criticism is not as a rule of great interest to the layman, but this book deals not only with a great artist, but with a great man, one of the foremost of living Americans.

FRANK DUENECK. By NORBERT HEERMANN. Houghton Mifflin Company. \$2.

Albert Payson Terhune, author of *Fortune* and better known as Bert, was compelled to give an account of himself and foisted as follows:

"I am of a gentle but thirsty disposition. Jim Corbett once crowned me, in print, as 'the best amateur heavyweight boxer in America' (which I wasn't). I once wrote fifty-one jokes in two days and sold fifty of them (it was a case of dire need and I've never written a joke since). For a brief time I had to eat on 15 cents a day; not for sociological reasons, but to keep alive. Also I know by experience how to handle both the shovel and the pick (there is a knack in both that amounts to an art). I am mildly insane on the subject of Sunnybank (his place in the country) and my collics. I crossed the Syrian desert and wilderness on horseback before the railroad came to Syria, and there I underwent perils almost as grave as those of a man who travels on the subway under the new schedule."

WE would direct the attention of our readers to the article on the editorial page of to-day's SUNDAY SUN reviewing *The Story of The Sun, 1833-1915*, by Frank M. O'Brien. This history of *The Sun* is much more than just that. It is a picture of many aspects of an older New York than the one we live in, and it presents a series of portraits of remarkable and interesting men, some famous, some not. The book is published by the George H. Doran Company at \$3.

G. P. Putnam's Sons are publishing in this country *Eminent Victorians*, by Lytton Strachey, which was the basis of Gilbert K. Chesterton's letter in *Books and the Book World* for August 25.

TO THE EDITOR OF BOOKS AND THE BOOK WORLD—Sir: In your number of July 21 you said: "We have canned our strawberries and cherries, but we have yet to can the Kaiser, so we shall consult instantly a copy of *Home Canning, Preserving and Drying*, by A. Louise Andrea."

I regret that my book did not give this particular information, but herewith are practical directions and recipe:

First pickle with Liberty bonds, then place in a democracy canner with equal parts of reparation and restitution salts. Seal, test for leaks and set away.

A. LOUISE ANDREA.

NEW YORK, October 11.

TO THE EDITOR OF BOOKS AND THE BOOK WORLD—Sir: The following emendation of the second paragraph of your editorial article of October 13 on *The Coming War of Ideas* may hasten your restoration to a normal spiritual outlook upon the future, which you seem to have viewed through a looking glass.

"We know for certain just a little more than nothing that is so. We are

staggering along under a crushing burden of illusions. The war has overworked our emotional natures and distorted our perspectives. We are toting around with us a host of bogies and phantasmal fears to which our vivid imaginations have been giving the appearance of realities. We still believe in spooks, though professing to be scientific. It is a weakness of our poor human nature that we must have these things in order to be happy. We have read too much about the war and predicted too much as to its effects. We know something must happen to us after it is over. Having become inured to war the thought of peace—even in the realm of ideas—is repugnant to us. We have forgotten that this war is, in a very real sense, a war of ideas that have been made flesh and marched forth to battle. Of course after this welter of blood we shall have a welter of mysticism. The legend and myth makers are already busy, but there is power in the blood and its cleansing effect shall be felt for generations to come. It will recreate some of our old illusions that in our fetid atmosphere of material accomplishment we came dangerously near losing. We shall appreciate soon the truth spoken by the mystic Man of Nazareth, that we live not by bread alone but by every one of the precious illusions that the god of our better natures has created."

Yours is the best, though not the most pretentious, by far book review this side of the Atlantic.

ERNEST DODD CONDIT.

PASSAIC, N. J., October 13.

A full length novel by Robert W. Chambers that has never had serial publication is being published by D. Appleton & Co. It is entitled *The Laughing Girl* and it is a satire on war time in Switzerland, where there's a plot born every minute, keeping pace with the well known world's production of fools.

An American History in Fifty Volumes

THE Yale University Press announces the publication of the first volumes in a series of historical narratives to be completed in fifty volumes and to be called *The Chronicles of America*. The series is edited by Professor Allen Johnson of Yale. It is sold only by subscription for the complete series, payable at \$3.50 a volume as delivered, the publishers reserving the right to increase the price of unsold volumes.

The books are to be illustrated with several hundred historical pictures and special maps; they will be beautifully printed and bound. They are to be independent of each other and yet are to relate themselves as a whole into a connected history; and while they will be authoritative they will also, it is hoped, prove readable and popular.

Ellsworth Huntington of Yale, Mary Johnston, the novelist; Maud Wilder Goodwin, known as a writer of fiction; Sydney G. Fisher, Max Farrand, Edward S. Corwin, Ralph D. Paine, writer of sea stories and histories; Agnes C. Laut, historian of the Northwest; Stewart Edward White, Emerson Hough, Bliss Perry, Samuel P. Orth, Edward Hungerford, the recorder of railway history; John Moody, the investment specialist; Burton J. Hendrick and Harold Howland of the *Outlook* (who writes the volume on Col. Roosevelt) are some of the authors of books in the series.

Ten of the fifty books are now being published. They will be put out ten at a time. They are grouped under six headings as follows: Ten books on *The Morning of America*, seven on *The Winning of Independence*, seven on *The Vision of the West*, eight on *The Storm of Secession*, sixteen on *The Noontide of America* and two books on *Our Neighbors*.

H. G. Wells' New Novel— *Joan and Peter*

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